



Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

DEC 17 1996

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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

The Honorable Carol Moseley-Braun  
United States Senate  
320 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moseley-Braun:

Thank you for your letter, dated November 21, 1996, on behalf of your constituent, Jerold Gruebel. Mr. Gruebel expressed concern regarding the Commission's recent proposal on policies for developing the initial digital television (DTV) channel allotments. His specific concern is that our proposals would result in the loss of channel 65 which is used by a translator station of television station WSEC-TV to serve Springfield, Illinois.

In the *Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making (Notice)* in the digital TV (DTV) proceeding, MM Docket No. 87-268, the Commission stated that it is considering a spectrum option for digital TV that would permit the eventual recovery of 138 megahertz of spectrum nationwide. This spectrum would be obtained from the lower VHF channels, *i.e.*, channels 2-6 (54-72 MHz and 76-88 MHz), and upper UHF channels, *i.e.*, 52-69 (698-806 MHz). The Commission further noted that this option may facilitate the early recovery of a portion of this spectrum. For example, it may be possible to recover 60 MHz of spectrum almost immediately from the band 746-806 MHz, *i.e.*, UHF channels 60-69, while protecting the relatively few full-service analog and digital broadcasters in that spectrum.

In the *Notice*, the Commission stated that while it does not intend to decide whether to reallocate channels 60-69 in the DTV proceeding, it nonetheless recognizes that there are other uses for this spectrum. For example, this spectrum could be licensed for flexible mobile operations; a portion of it could be used to meet public safety needs; and/or a portion could be designated temporarily or permanently for low power TV and TV translator stations. If such an early recovery were to occur, we would initiate a separate allocation proceeding to decide how this spectrum should be used. While the Commission has mentioned competitive bidding as a possible method for licensing this spectrum, it has not yet taken a position on how licenses might be awarded for any new services in this spectrum.

We estimate that about 80 to 90 percent of all TV translator stations would be able to continue to operate if all of the DTV allotments were activated. These estimates are based on the expected impact of new DTV operations and do not take into account any spectrum recovery proposals. We note, for example, that about 17 percent of all TV translator stations would be affected by recovery of channels 60-69. However, it should be noted that channels 60-69 are used for DTV allotments in a number of instances and some impact on translator operations on these channels would occur even absent our spectrum recovery effort. We also note that many current TV channels have fewer than 100 TV translator stations nationwide,

while many other channels have significantly more than 100 such stations. We therefore believe that with more intensive utilization of the remaining channels, it should be possible to accommodate many TV translator operations that are displaced.

Please be assured that the Commission recognizes the important benefits that TV translators provide to the public. In view of these important benefits, we proposed a number of steps to mitigate the likelihood and effects of displacement on TV translator stations. These proposals include allowing TV translator stations: 1) to apply for a suitable replacement channel in the same area without being subject to competing applications; 2) to operate until a displacing DTV station or a new primary service provider is operational; 3) to change their operating parameters to cure or prevent interference caused to or received from a DTV station or other protected service. We further proposed to amend our rules to permit TV translator stations that are adversely affected by the implementation of DTV or our spectrum recovery efforts to take terrain shielding and other appropriate engineering factors into account in order to avoid interference to full service TV stations.

The comment period for this proceeding ended November 22, 1996. However, reply comments can be submitted through January 10, 1997. The Commission is very much aware of the concerns of existing television operators and we will carefully consider their comments in our decision to amend the Table of Allotments for broadcast television.

We will also include a copy of your letter in MM Docket No. 87-268.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Richard M. Smith  
Chief  
Office of Engineering and Technology

CAROL MOSELEY-BRAUN  
ILLINOIS

COMMITTEES:  
BANKING, HOUSING, AND  
URBAN AFFAIRS

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1303

FINANCE  
SPECIAL AGING

*OK'd  
action  
6581*

November 21, 1996

Mr. Reed E. Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
Room 814--Office of the Chairman  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt:


Enclosed is an inquiry I received from my constituent, Jerold Gruebel.

Because of my desire to be responsive to all communications, your consideration of the matter is requested.

Please return your findings in duplicate form along with this correspondence to the attention of Steve Collens on the envelope only.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours truly,

  
Carol Moseley-Braun  
United States Senator

CMB:sc

# CONVOCOM INTELLIGENT VISION

August 13, 1996

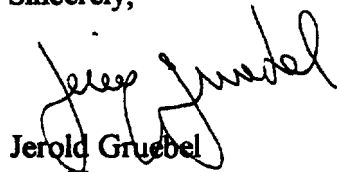
The Honorable Carol Moseley-Braun  
320 Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Moseley-Braun:

The FCC is planning to auction TV channels 60 - 69 for mobile radio use. Under the plan, winners of the auction would be required to protect the service areas of full power stations now operating on the channel but would pull the plug on 1,700 low power stations and translators. With loss of this spectrum, the grade A signal for Springfield could be eliminated. WSEC-TV 14, (Jacksonville) with translator channel 65 serving Springfield, would no longer serve the state capitol of Illinois.

This ruling would be a major setback for Springfield and the surrounding communities, where some 60,000 non-cable TV households would no longer have access to Sesame Street and all the other quality educational programs of public television. I am writing to you to voice my concerns and to encourage you to protect WSEC-TV by voting against this ruling. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jerold Gruebel  
President  
CONVOCOM  
WMEC/WQEC/WSEC

&

President  
Illinois Public Broadcasting Council (IPBC)

**22** **27** **14**